

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending in this application after this Amendment. Claims 1, 5, and 8 are independent. Claims 8-13 have been added. In light of the amendments and remarks made herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings. The Examiner further rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Drawings

In response to the Examiner's objection to the drawings, as drawing 17 contains a typographical error, by this Amendment, Applicant is submitting a corrected Fig. 17. Based upon this submission, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 1-7, asserting that for at least claims 1-5, the specification and figures do not support the limitation "in a manner such that print data, which represents at least one of images and characters to be printed, is supplied to each of the plurality of printers." The Examiner further asserts that the specification, with respect to Fig. 19 and lines 5-11 of

page 18 provides that one of print images is distributed to one of the plurality of printers. The Examiner concludes that the specification of the application does not teach the same print data to be distributed to each of the printers and the claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor at the time the application was filed had possession of the claimed invention. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection and disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of Applicant's specification.

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is reading the teachings of the specification at page 18, lines 5-11, out of context. It is respectfully submitted that the illustration depicted in Fig. 19 shows that the print images are sorted in order of decreasing print-job quantity and the printers are sorted in order of decreasing allocated job quantity. The figure further illustrates which images are printed by which printers (page 18, lines 1-11). However, this is only one portion of the overall apparatus/method of the present invention. For example, as depicted in Fig. 14, the print images may be selected and the number of prints of the print image may be designated. Additionally, the print size may be selected. As depicted in Fig. 17, the overall printing workload is calculated. When the overall printing workload

has been calculated, print jobs are allocated to each of the printers connected to the multiple-printer control apparatus. The allocation of print jobs is carried out in such a manner that print processing will be executed simultaneously using the plurality of printers to minimize the time needed for completion of all prints (page 16, lines 1-8).

Fig. 18 illustrates the processing capabilities of the printers, while Fig. 19 illustrates the processing for allocating print jobs to each of the printers. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the claims, when read in light of the specification, are described in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. As such, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn.

By this Amendment, Applicant has added new claims 8-13 for consideration by the Examiner. As there has been no prior art cited against the pending claims, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are in proper condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Catherine M. Voisinet (Reg. No. 52,327) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview

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in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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Attachment: Replacement Sheet - Fig. 17

(Rev. 09/30/03)